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Mr. Leland is to have charge of the next meeting of this Congress, which is to be held in London during the following year; every measure will be taken to render the occasion agreeable to American visitors, and it is hoped that the American Folk-Lore Society may be represented.

TO KILL CATS IS UNLUCKY. — Yesterday, while cutting hay, the machine caught a cat, and cut off all four legs of the poor creature. The Irishman in charge threw the animal over the fence. In an hour or two the neighbors found it, and threw it back, saying, "He can't put off his bad luck on me, — I'll not kill his cats for him." Accordingly, the poor thing was tossed to and fro, until I heard of the matter, and found a man who happened to be of American birth, to put an end to the animal's pain. As he killed it he said, "I ain't superstitious, but no Irishman will ever kill a cat."

Mary H. Skeel, Newburgh, N. Y.

VOODOO AND VODUN. — Reading with interest the papers on "Voodooism" in the various numbers of the Journal of American Folk-Lore, I observe this remark: "When human testimony is so defective, it is natural to regard the evidence of language. In an African superstition, one would expect the survival of some African words and phrases."

The word Voodoo itself, however, seems to be African, and to be used in a similar sense. In Featherman's "Social History of the Races of Mankind," volume on the Nigritians, p. 216, it is stated, that, in Dahomey, "Vodun or Vodum is the name for any object considered as fetish in the sense of a protecting talisman." With this fact may be compared the special use of Voodoo or Hoodoo in the United States as meaning that which brings good luck (vol. i. p. 17, note).

As to the worship of these same people, we are told that the snake is with them the highest divinity. It symbolizes supreme bliss and universal benevolence. Reverential honors are paid to a number of them sheltered in a fetish house. They are piously cared for by female devotees, who feed them and present offerings of silk stuffs, bullocks, goats, fowls, cloth, rum, etc. They are considered so sacred that a girl who accidentally touches one becomes possessed, and is at once a consecrated person, being taken from her parents to be taught the arts of singing and dancing, which constitute the ritual of the snake divinity. The evening and night are mentioned as the usual time for the young girls to become possessed (Nigritians, pp. 214, 215).

Louise Kennedy, Concord, Mass.

(The corresponding verb *envaudouiller*, to bewitch, seems sufficient to mark *vaudou* as of French origin. As for Vodun, it may resemble *vaudou* in sound, yet have no etymological relationship. Such similarities are misleading. What does seem to appear more clearly, the more we know of the matter, is the close correspondence of European and African belief in regard to witchcraft and magic. — W. W. N.)